

Iowa SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL Annual Report 2004 - 05



VISION STATEMENT

All children in Iowa are members of communities that provide opportunities and needed supports for meaningful lives and quality education experiences.
(2000)

State of Iowa
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa
50319-0146

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Table of Contents

	Page
Mission Statement, Purpose, Duties	4
Membership	5
Annual Priorities and Goals	6
Key Activities/Accomplishments	6
Special Presentations to the Panel	12
Subcommittees	15
2005 – 06 Meeting Dates	15
Acronyms/Terms	16
Contact Information	17

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL

MISSION STATEMENT

The Iowa Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) serves as a collaborative resource to advise and advocate on behalf of all children with special needs and their families on issues of best practice and special education compliance. This panel provides opportunity for dialogue among diverse stakeholders regarding philosophies and policies that will result in successful outcomes for persons with disabilities. (1998)

PURPOSE:

“To provide policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities...”

DUTIES:

- a) Advise State education agency on unmet needs;
- b) Comment publicly on any rules and regulations proposed by the State;
- c) Advise State education agency (SEA) in developing evaluations and on reporting data to the Secretary;
- d) Advise SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports;
- e) Advise SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services.

§300.652

2004-2005

SEAP MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Panel consists of representatives from both public and private sectors who by virtue of their position, interest, and training can contribute to the education of children with disabilities. A majority (51%) of the members of the Panel must be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities. The Director of the Department of Education (DE) appoints members of the Advisory Panel.

Executive Committee:

David VanHorn – Chair (Area Education Agency, Director Special Education)
 Leon Mulford – Vice-Chair (Parent of child with a disability)
 Lana Michelson – Bureau Chief (DE Bureau of Children, Family, Community Services)
 Diane Moore – Panel Facilitator (DE)

Panel Members:

Kyla Alba – (Parent of child with a disability)	Marlys McNutt-Nail – (Individual with a disability)
Patrick Clancy – (Urban Education Network)	David Mitchell – (Vocational Rehabilitation Services)
Marsha Gelina – (Protection & Advocacy)	Jon Muller – (Juvenile & Adult Corrections)
Diana Gonzalez – (Board of Regents)	Jule Reynolds – (Parent Training and Information Center of Iowa [PTI], Parent of child with a disability)
Allen Harris – (Individual with a disability)	W. Ray Richardson – (Superintendent)
Beth Harris – (Parent of child with a disability)	Stacy Schultz – (Parent of child with a disability)
Tami Hemann – (Parent of child with a disability)	Warren Steinbrueck – (Parent of child with a disability)
Chuck Hinz – (Post-Secondary)	LaShell Staley - (Parent of child with a disability)
Nancy Kucera – (Adult Correctional Facility)	Susan Stock – (Teacher)
Cindy Laughead – (Parent of child with a disability)	Deb Thomas – (Institute of Higher Education, Parent of child with a disability)
Vincent Lewis – (Juvenile Justice, Principal)	Dottie Van Hooser – (Private Schools, Parent of child with a disability)
Edward Loggins III – (Parent of child with a disability)	

Panel Staff:

Susan White – Panel Secretary (DE)
 Dennis Dykstra – Administrative Consultant (DE)

Annual Priorities and Goals

Priorities:

1. To collaborate with the Department of Education and others to develop and refine strategies that ensure a comprehensive system of personnel development.
2. To promote a comprehensive and coordinated service delivery and funding system including the areas of mental health and transition services.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

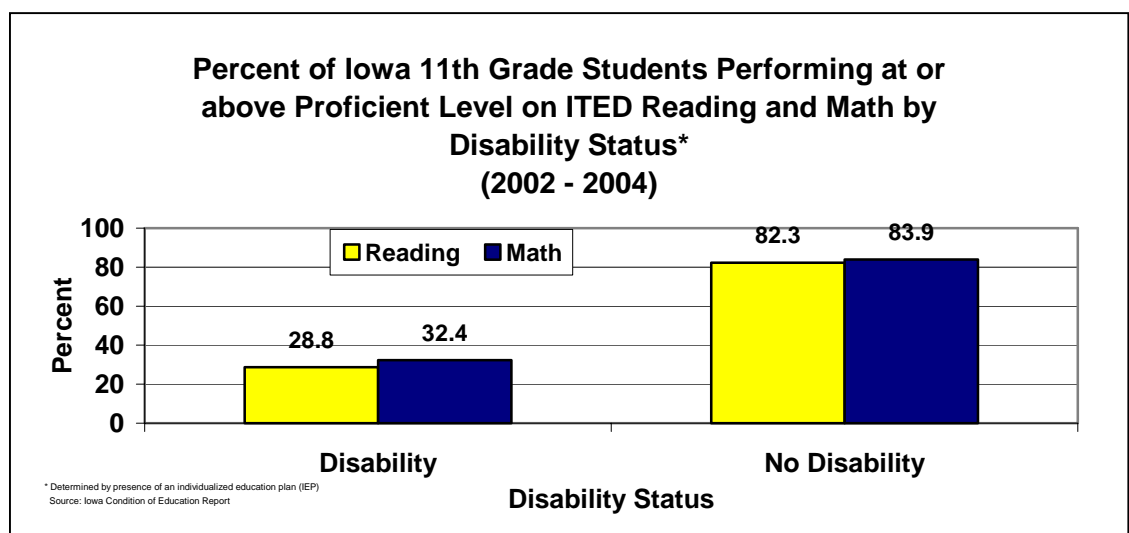
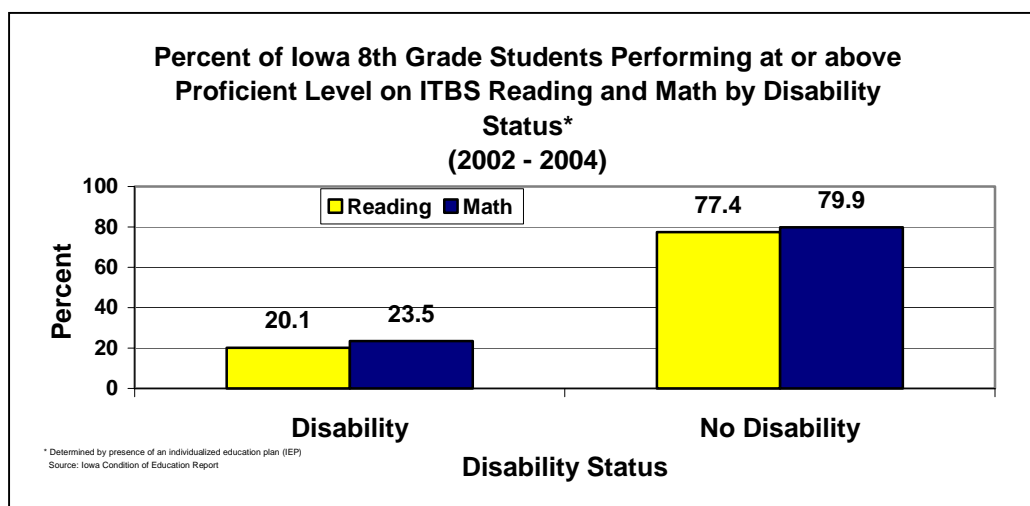
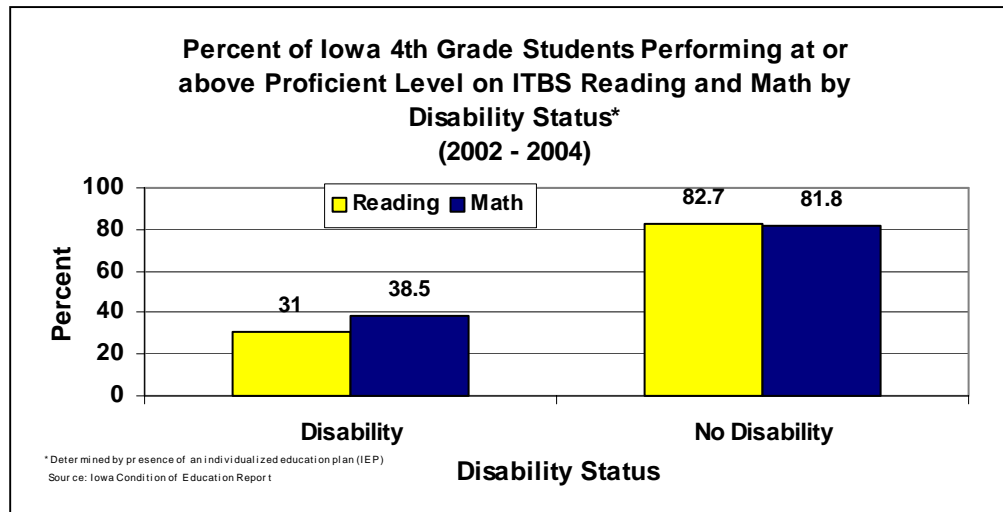
The following activities were the primary emphasis for panel members in the past year. The information reflects panel involvement and responsiveness to state issues and public concerns.

The Panel reviewed the Department of Education's Special Education outcomes from 2003 – 04. After much discussion to reach consensus, the Panel recommended the following outcomes for the State *of the State in Special Education* report.

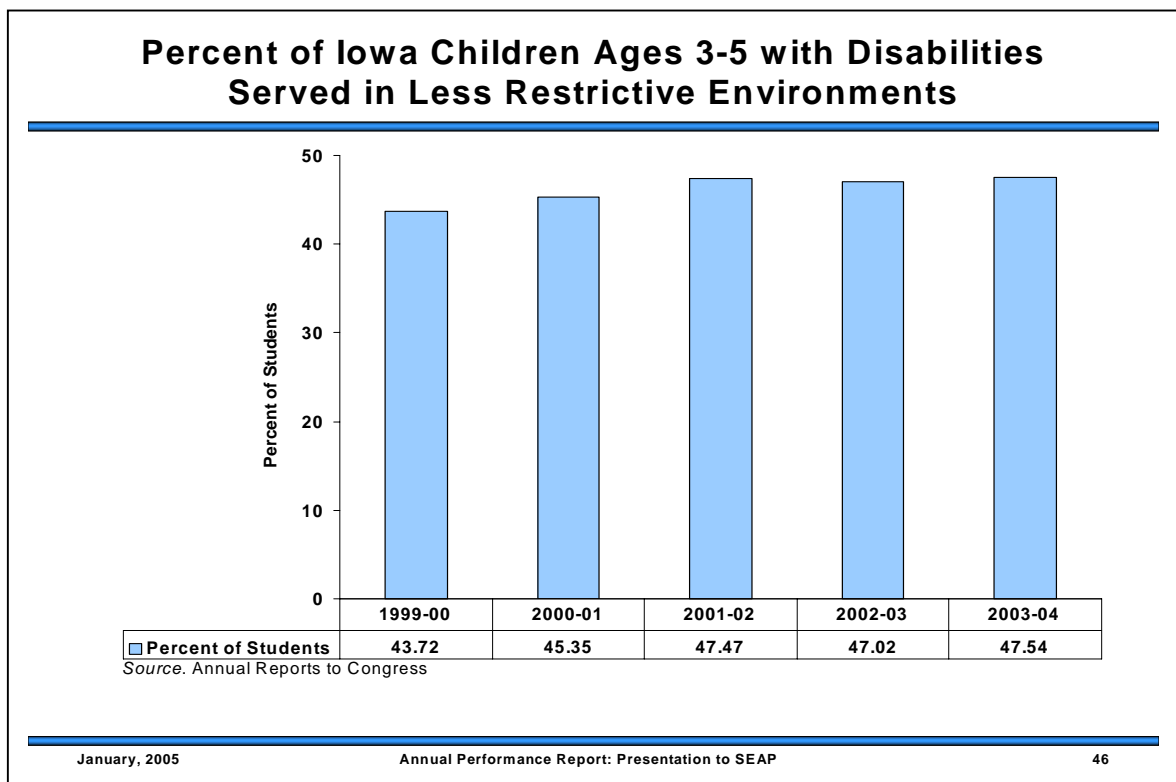
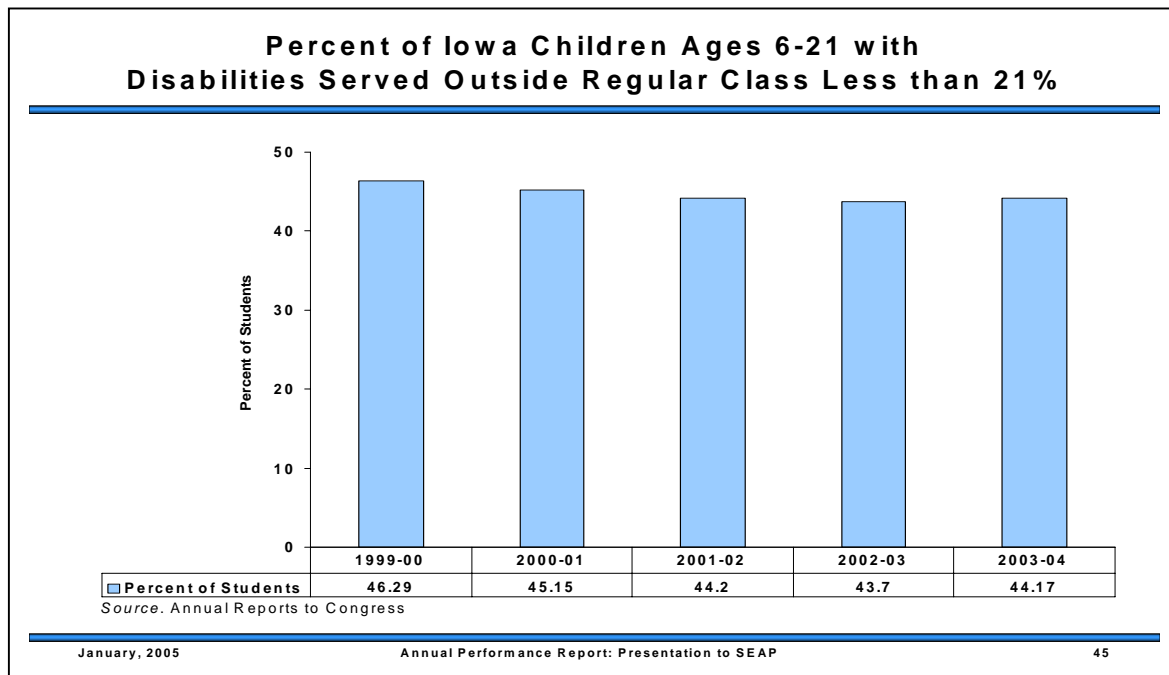
- Students receiving special education will meet high education standards (No change)
- Students with disabilities will be integrated with non-disabled peers throughout **their educational** experience (Changes in bold)
- Students with disabilities will attend post secondary education or be gainfully employed (No change)
- State will have an effective early intervention system (No change)
- State will provide effective general supervision (No change)
- Families will have an integral role in decision-making (New outcome)

The Panel members have a commitment to being well informed on issues related to the above referenced outcomes and to monitor the related data. The following section includes some of the key special education data reviewed by the panel:

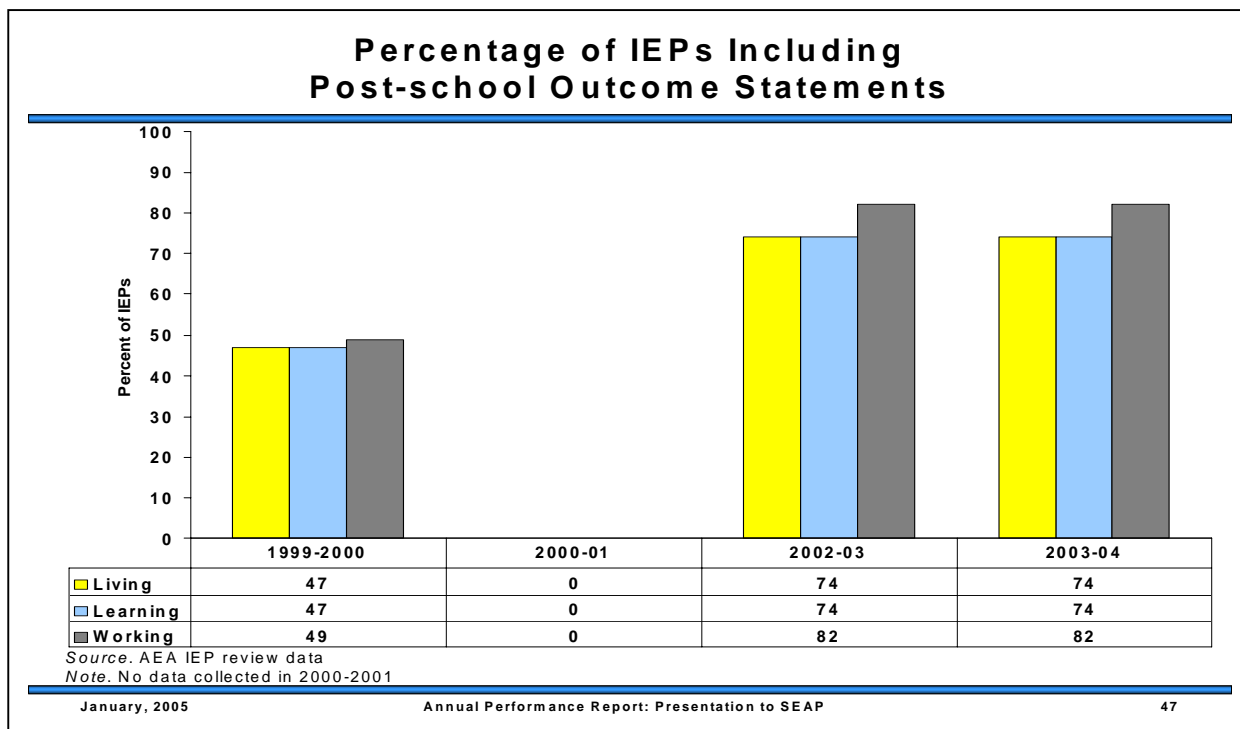
Outcome #1: Students receiving special education will meet high education standards.



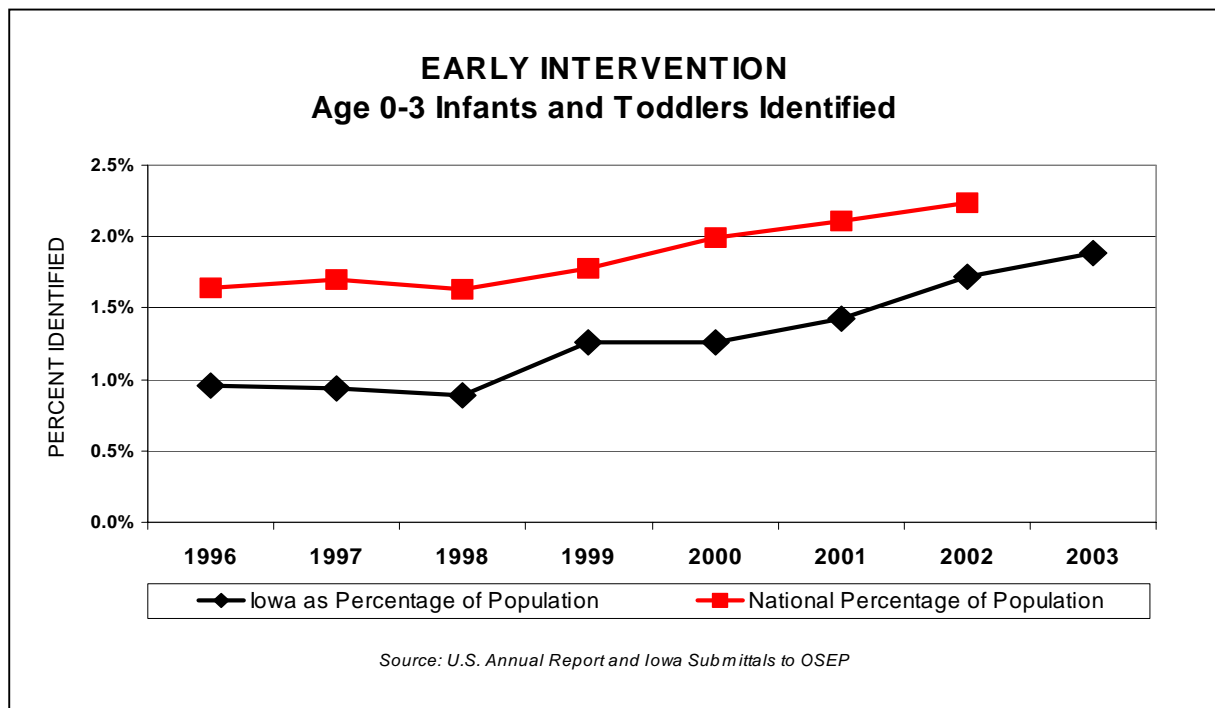
Outcome #2: Students with disabilities will be integrated with non-disabled peers throughout their educational experience



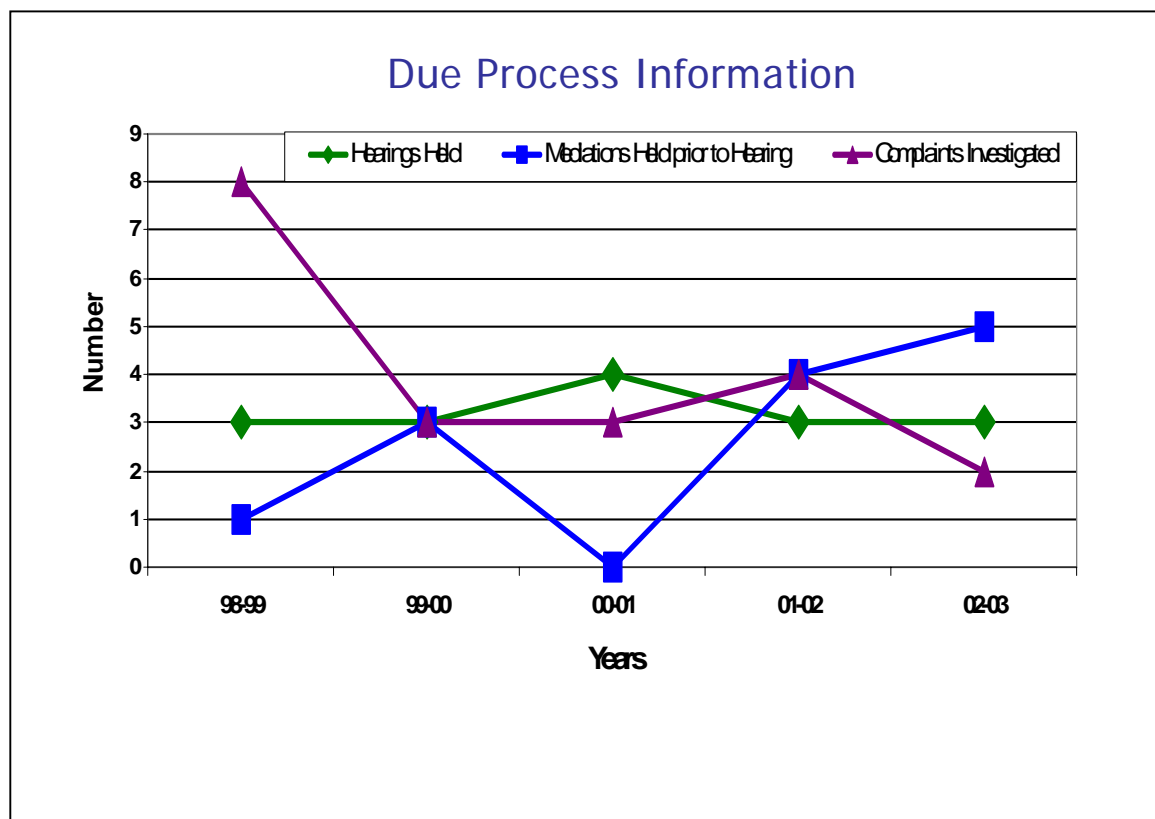
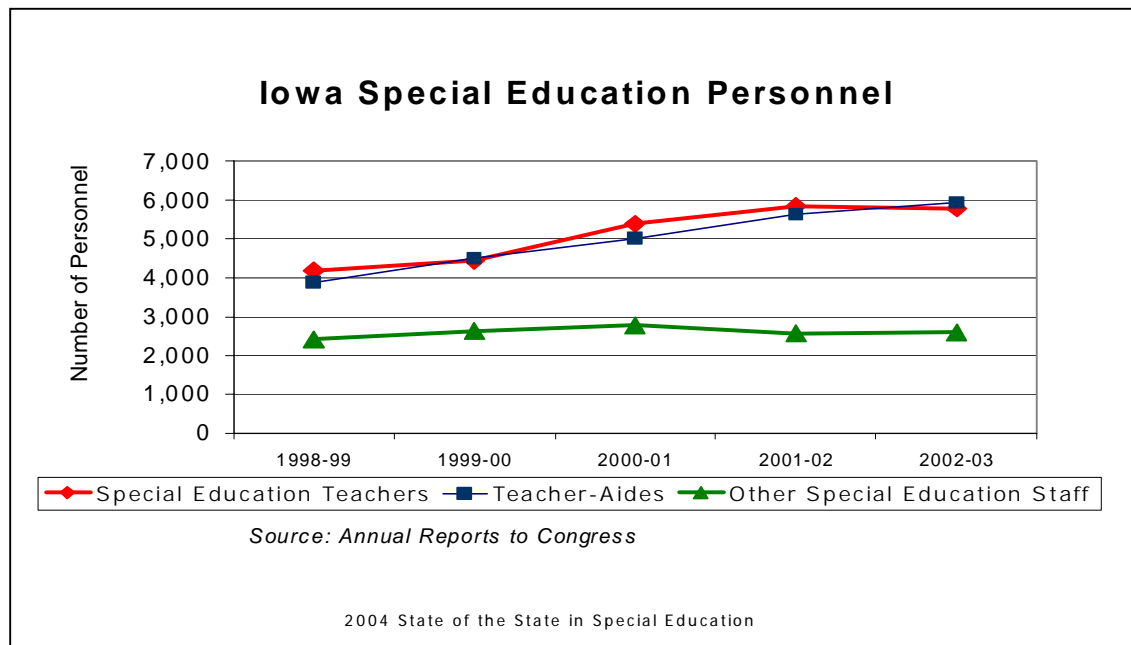
Outcome #3: Students with disabilities will attend post secondary education or be gainfully employed



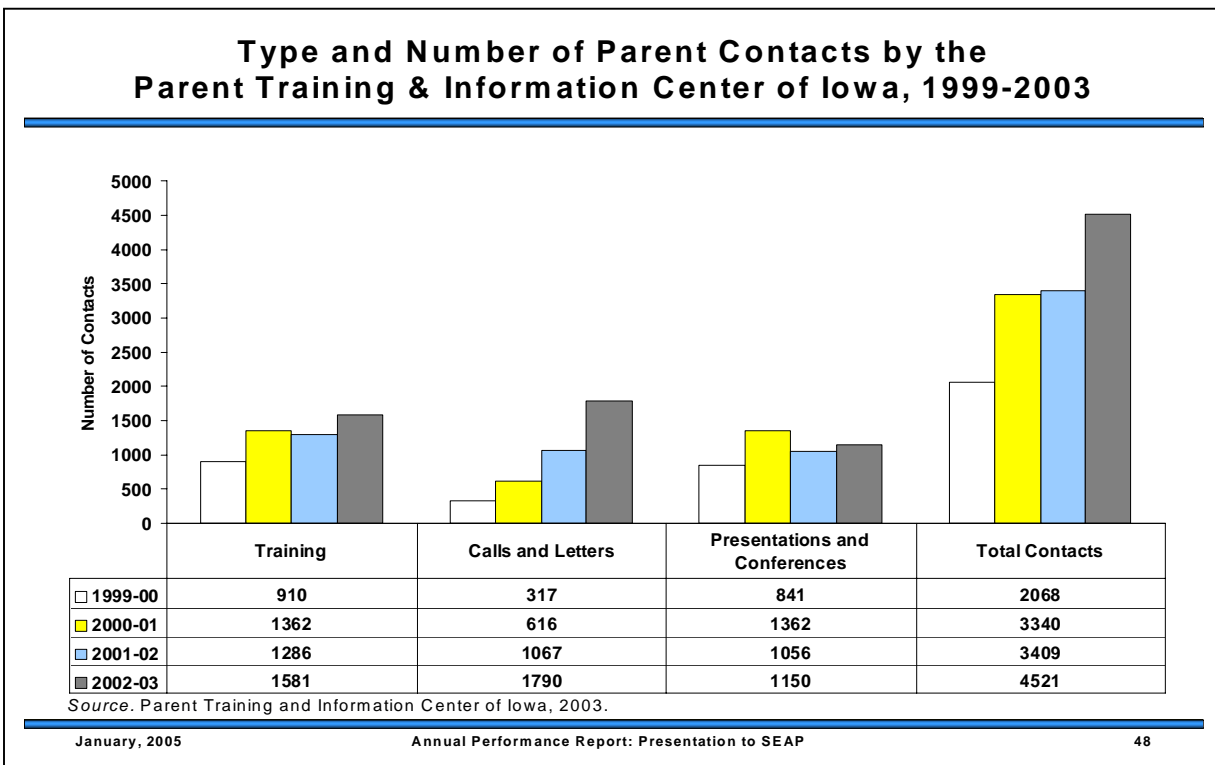
Outcome #4: State will have an effective early intervention system



Outcome #5: State will provide effective general supervision



Outcome #6: Families will have an integral role in decision-making



Special Presentations to the Panel

In order to fulfill their role of advising DE on special education issues the panel members felt they needed to stay current on key aspects of the special education system in Iowa. During the year DE staff involved with specific programs or projects were invited to present to the panel. Panel members were frequently asked to provide feedback or make recommendations for specific issues discussed. Following is a brief synopsis of presentations and panel response during this past year.

1. Monitoring

In September small groups reviewed 2003-04 Key Survey questions (the web-based system use for LEA self-assessment/school improvement process) and provided feedback to staff for revising the survey to be more effective. Several times throughout the year, Karen Martens presented updates on the efforts to build Iowa's Monitoring System. Updates included such issues as: developing a system to measure effectiveness of actions, focusing on priority areas, integrating the process within existing systems, and offering accountability at all levels and alignment of Local Education Agency (LEA), AEA, and SEA resources.

2. Annual Performance Report

LauraBelle Sherman-Proehl and Barbara Ohlund presented the Part C and Part B Annual Progress Report (APR). When finalized the report goes to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The Panel formed small groups to review the Part B indicators and answer questions that were provided for their input. Throughout the year updates on the APR were provided. The Panel also discussed ideas for the 6-year performance plan. All comments were transcribed for Bureau staff to use in developing the APR and performance plan.

3. Intervention/Instructional Decision Making Model

Eric Neessen presented on the progress of Iowa's Instructional Decision Making Model (IDM). The basic premise of IDM is that all students are part of the general education system. The guiding principles are:

- Some students require instruction that is different from the core instructional program.
- Accurate reliable assessment data is required to meet the needs of all students.

4. State Improvement Grant

The State Improvement Grant, funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), is primarily intended to support state educational agencies (SEA) and their partners in reforming and improving their systems for providing educational, early intervention, and transition services for professional development, technical assistance and dissemination of knowledge about best practices to improve results for children with disabilities. The goal for Iowa's grant is to ensure an adequate supply of highly qualified teachers for Iowa's students with disabilities and to prepare parents of students with disabilities to work as partners with

educators. Five initiatives over the next three years will address this goal in a systematic manner.

5. Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)

Presentations by Charlene Thiede and Suana Wessendorf kept the Panel apprised of the state's PBS initiative. Iowa's school-wide model helps schools offer:

- Regular, predictable, positive learning and teaching environments
- Positive adult and peer models
- Regular positive reinforcement
- Academic and social behavioral development that leads to success

6. Compliance Sanctions and Accountability

Toni VanCleve led the Panel in exploring various options for Iowa to consider regarding the OSEP mandated compliance system. An examination of several other states' plans assisted the small groups in making recommendations for Iowa.

7. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

Penny Milburn presented the Iowa Empowerment Board's newly approved assessment for Kindergarten students. The *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)* will be Iowa's indicator of "children ready to succeed in school". DIBELS is a standardized, individually administered measure of early literacy development. By using DIBELS, the development of pre-reading and early reading skills (indicators for early reading success) can be monitored. Kindergarten teachers will have access to individual student results and data can be aggregated by state and community empowerment areas. This standardized measure has been approved by the US Department of Education for Reading First.

8. Dropout/Graduation Work Group

Tom Jeschke reported on the efforts of a work group comprised of AEA and school representatives and DE staff to recommend changes to address the dropout and graduation rates in special education in Iowa.

The group had three tasks: (1) look at trends in special education as they relate to dropout and graduation; (2) study a variety of strategies to reduce dropouts and increase graduation rates; and (3) develop recommendations that may be utilized to stem those two problems. The group made approximately 12 to 15 recommendations to the DE.

9. LRE Study Group

Another area of concern in Iowa is the state's data on Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Steve Maurer updated the Panel on the work of the LRE Study Group. The mission of this study group is to examine statewide LRE issues and develop a plan of action to address concerns for students with disabilities ages 3-21. This plan may contain recommendations, strategies, and activities, to address the identified issues.

10. Major Changes in IDEA 2004

Lana Michelson presented the major changes in IDEA 2004. In general, IDEA 04 places an emphasis on homeless students, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and students that are wards of the state. Other changes include:

- ensuring that local educational agencies measure the performance of students with disabilities on all State or district-wide assessments.
- establishing that a national study of alternate assessments will be conducted to ensure that these assessments measure the progress of mentally retarded students and meet appropriate standards.
- reducing frivolous lawsuits by holding attorneys liable, enabling parents and LEAs to collect the cost of attorney fees as the prevailing party, and offering a resolution session before going to a due process hearing.
- clarifying that mediation is available at any time.
- requiring complaints of school or parents to be clear and specific, and establishing two-year time limit for filing a complaint and a 90-day limit for filing appeals to a court.

11. Highly Qualified Teachers

Norma Lynch gave the Panel an overview of the new “Highly Qualified Teacher” legislation and implications. The law deals mostly with required endorsements for teaching curriculum to specific students, both in special education and general education.

Secondary level teachers are most impacted by the requirements. When teaching students with disabilities all teachers are required to be endorsed in core content areas. Teachers are allowed to co-teach to students based on their endorsements. Iowa is developing a plan to ensure a full contingent of highly qualified teachers for all children receiving special education services.

12. Data Driven Decision Making

Guest speaker, Lawrence C. Gloeckler, is Executive Director of the Special Education Institute at the International Center for Leadership in Education in Rexford, New York. He also serves as Senior Policy Advisor at the Governor James B. Hunt Institute for Education Leadership and Policy at the University of North Carolina and is also a member of National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) Professional Advisory Board.

Gloeckler discussed the use of data to make decisions for the special education system in his native New York. Using charts and graphs he described how to use data to drive policy decisions, allocate resources, communicate to stakeholders, and pinpoint areas of performance that need attention. Gloeckler has been working with the Bureau to help administrators and staff examine local special education programs in the context of today’s expectations for student performance and the monitoring process.

SEAP Subcommittees

The Panel identified a need for designing some improvements to the new member orientation and the SEAP Annual Report. Two subcommittees were formed to gather information and draft recommendations for revisions.

The Panel requested the process begin with an open brainstorming session including all Panel members at the March 3, 2005 meeting. The brainstorming session then produced further work for the subcommittees. Each subcommittee met one hour prior to the regular meetings and made their recommendations at the June meeting. Work to adopt the improvements will be done over the summer with Panel approval via mail and email.

Meeting Dates 2005 – 2006

Wednesday, August 31, 2005	10:00am – 7:00pm	Best Western Motel, Des Moines, IA
Thursday, September 1	9:00am – 3:00pm	Best Western Motel, Des Moines, IA
Thursday, September 22	9:00am – 3:00pm	Best Western Motel, Des Moines, IA
Thursday, November 17	9:00am – 3:00pm	Best Western Motel, Des Moines, IA
Thursday, January 19, 2006	9:00am – 3:00pm	Best Western Motel, Des Moines, IA
Thursday, February 16 <i>(Make up day in case January meeting cancelled due to weather)</i>	9:00am – 3:00pm	Best Western Motel, Des Moines, IA
Thursday, April 20	9:00am – 3:00pm	Best Western Motel, Des Moines, IA
Thursday, June 15	9:00am – 3:00pm	Best Western Motel, Des Moines, IA

Acronyms/Terms

AEA – Area Education Agency

APR –Annual Progress Report

DE – Department of Education

DIBELS –Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills

IDM – Instructional Decision Making Model

LEA – Local Education Agency

LEP – Limited English Proficiency

NCLD – National Center for Learning Disabilities

OSEP – Office of Special Education Programs

Panel – Special Education Advisory Panel

PBS – Positive Behavior Supports

PTI – Parent Training and Information Center of Iowa

SEA – State Education Agency

SEAP – Special Education Advisory Panel

CONTACT INFORMATION

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